556 562 582 bride-to-be was introduced to her bridegroom, she walked toward him across a row of mats. A feast was organized to celebrate this important and joyous event. Dances accompanied with a flow of beer went on for weeks, sometimes for a whole month.

[431] The father gave his son-in-law a great many nkomf (3) objects

3. See Chapter II, Article VII.

so that the bolímbó often became yéngaende or at least lifayǎnjoku. (4)

4. See Chapter VII, Article IV.

He did not allow his daughter to leave without giving her at least one ebíla to wait on her. (5) Thus when Bolángé w'Ioma of Lokóndola

5. See Chapter VII, Article III.

(Injólo, Ngombe) married Bonjéngó, daughter of Ilónjó y'Ókákema of Bompóma (Injólo, Engónjó) (who died in 1934), the bride received from her father four bibíla to do the work, as well as a young cousin who was to stay with her [34] to bring her firewood. In this way the father made sure that his beloved daughter would retain her honorable position as a great lady.

556 562 The husband, who wanted his wife to retain her superior status, now makes her his bolímbó as well. (1) The term was: Bón ów'olímbó

1. See Chapter VII, Article III. That is, unless she is his first wife. See ibid, and Article I.

ótswá ó wǎlí ów'olímbó ék'ómé. He would say to those assembled: "Her father proclaimed her bolímbó, and I proclaim her bolímbó as well (Is'ékáé ókvákí, emí mpé njókya á ng' óko)."

What was the reason for the existence of this custom?

572
[201] Friends seldom or never give signs of their affection, apart from gifts and mutual assistance. Men are seldom seen embracing, although women do so frequently.

The Nkundó are familiar with friendship pacts (called boseka or, among the Bombwanja, likandeko) (1). Two persons of the same

1. Bofilí among the Ekonda, mbale among the Batswa.

sex are bound to one another in friendship (kota boseka or likandeko) [431] in the presence of a witness (ndonga), whose duty it is to deliver the gifts that are exchanged.

The conclusion of a friendship agreement is actually a custom of the women; men -- usually the husbands -- create friendship bonds only secondarily, in imitation of their wives. This pact is not automatically hereditary; the children may continue it -- through the same ndonga as their fathers -- but they are free to let it lapse. (2)

2. See also a special reason for friendship pacts in Chapter IV, Article I.

Two elements may be distinguished in the friendship pact: congeniality or affection and mutual assistance. The latter is in itself a sign of friendship, but it is not infrequently the sole reason for the pact among men who seek reciprocal support by this means. [36] As for the women, it may be said, on the contrary, that gifts are considered purely as tokens of affection and their bonds are based exclusively on affection. Often women who are very fond of each other do not bind themselves in a friendship pact but are content to show their affection in all simplicity. Men also may be very good friends without having recourse to a pact. But the conclusion of an agreement makes their relationship public and thus protects it against deleterious influences such as misunderstandings, disagreements, outbursts of anger, etc. One might say that the pact represents the addition of the element of reason to the element of emotion.

832 husband will change to revulsion, and she will leave him to be with her charmer.

Part 3

The Search for a Wife

584 When a young man old enough to marry believes he has the means to do so, he goes out to seek a wife. Naturally, he knows a number of girls, and as a rule he has no trouble finding one who suits him. The courtship is quite simple. As everywhere there are meet- [831] ings, visits, chats, and jokes; but there is no romanticism or sentimentality, for they are absolutely unknown to these peoples. Since they are in a hurry [103] to reach the objective of their relationship, namely conjugal life, -- and their progress toward this goal is facilitated by usages and customs -- there remains little time for poetry.

There is no specific term for courtship itself. The Nkundó simply speak of "talking with a woman," sooja bǒmoto, "looking for a woman," asa bǒmoto. The girl who is its object is referred to as bombǒyó (or boambá among the Injólo).

First, the young man addresses his proposals to the girl: "ndanga ńkokolé (ńkokumbǒle) la wǎlí", "I want to take you for wife." She shows her agreement by saying, "ńkolanga wé ng' ókó", "I love you also," or more frequently, "elaká ô wé", "as you wish," yói ô liké, "it's up to you," or something of this sort. (1)

[195] [576]

1. Note that for the Nkundó these expressions have quite a different significance than would appear from the words. They express a real agreement and an explicit and personal consent. In fact it is considered improper for a woman to use a more direct expression.

584 The lovers exchange gifts. The girl gives food which her 431 mother has provided, or which she has been able to procure herself.

584 For his part, the young man gives her some small game animals
431 (especially the big rat called botómba, lemurs of the genus *eúnde*, etc.) or fish. These gifts have no specific name. The man's gifts are simply called mpató "gift sent"; the woman's are called botómo, a term used for all presents given by a woman to her lover (see also Chapter VI, Article VII, 2). The verb used with this noun is tumba, "to make burn." Etymologically the two words are in no way related.

Sometimes the sweethearts give each other a secret mutual pledge of their desire to be married. This pledge is called bondengé or bonengé and consists particularly of a necklace of beads called bafomakongo (or, more rarely, bisengé or bisengéla). [103]

581 In choosing their wives, the men allow themselves to be motivated by the various factors which may influence them in this realm, such as physical or moral attractions. Wealth or social rank almost never play a part in determining the choice. Youth is easily carried away by physical attraction and passionate love. Men who are already more settled as well as the more sensible young men pay more attention to moral qualities, such as general conduct, submissiveness, goodness, gentleness, and especially diligence, careful attention to work, etc. In short, we find here the full range of individual variations that are encountered elsewhere, with the exception of marriages motivated by financial or political interests or by the degree of moral elevation that can be aroused by the Christian religion, such as pure devotion.

584 After a few days of courtship the girl lets her suitor know that if he really loves her he had better settle the matter and that consequently he must obtain her parents' consent. Meanwhile they have [834] already had intimate relations several times; therefore the moment of official negotiations should not be delayed.

586 Seeking a wife who is already married is in no way different
587 from the procedure we have just described, but a great deal of circum-
584 spection must be used so that the husband's suspicions will not be aroused. The exchange of the secret pledge we have mentioned occurs especially in this situation.

Once the divorce is completed, the woman falls in the same category as a single girl since she is free.

Seeking a future wife in an as yet unborn child or one that is very young will be discussed in a special section (Chapter IV, Article I). [105]

583* 587 If the woman has not yet publicly given her consent because -- as may happen in the case of remarriage after a divorce -- ikulf, ndonga, and walo are all being paid at the same time, she now performs that ceremony. We need not describe it again; it is performed as indicated in Article III, 2. But in this instance the woman hands her father one or two rings, or a ring and a knife.

583* 585 Subsequently, the ndonga conveys the valuables to the woman's parents. He asks the husband: yélé bɔ́mbá la walo, "bring the walo valuables." The latter replies: "Here they are; hand them over to my father-in-law." The witness takes a few rings and places them in front of the latter, or rather he touches them and makes a gesture of pushing them toward the woman's parents, and they pull them toward themselves.

As soon as the walo is paid, the bompfka becomes walf or "wife." As has already been said, this word has no connection with walo, or with the root bal, "to marry"; etymologically it is related to analogous terms denoting "wife" and "woman" in other Bantu languages.

Article V. Valuables for the Mother

583* 473 Directly after he has conveyed the walo valuables to the woman's father, the ndonga asks the husband to pay the valuables for her mother: wélé ntaa la nkando [143] yɛ́ nyangɔ́y ɔ́ná, "bring the goat and the nkando for the child's mother." The following gifts are given:

1) At least one nanny goat and sometimes two or more according to the situation; never a billy-goat.

[901] 2) Two nkando, which are copper spirals worn on the legs. Formerly, two more for the arms were also required, and old women are still sometimes seen wearing them, but they have become much rarer than the spirals worn on the legs. Instead of nkando, the Elinga, the Wangata, the Bakɔ́la, and the Londa use the term mongɛ́. (1)

1. In Lokonda the term is nkɔ́kɔ́.

3) In the past the mother was also entitled to a lokombwɛ or lokombwɛ (depending on the dialect) (2) a heavy copper necklace.

2. The Lokonda term is lonkaɛ.

It was worth 5 bakonga. Nowadays this type of adornment has disappeared almost entirely. It is no longer demanded, for the mother prefers more interesting objects (see the following article).

Furthermore, at the present time substitutions for the goat and the nkando are being asked for in the form of shoes, suits, fabrics, etc.

The mother justifies her demands by recalling the suffering she has endured in bringing her daughter into the world and bringing her up. The valuables she receives belong exclusively to her and her family; they never pass into her husband's clan. She wears the nkando herself, or, if she already has some, she gives them to her sister or her brother, who may have need of them for his wife's bride price. The goats she similarly keeps or gives to her family, depending on her own preferences. Upon her death these valuables are inherited by her relatives, never by her husband or even her own children.

Obviously, the mother's clan has exclusive rights over this payment.

The situation does not change if the mother divorces the girl's father and is married to another man. The "mother's" valuables [144] still belong to her. Even if the separation occurs before her daughter's marriage, she retains her rights to nyɛngɛ ɛ̃ɛa.

If she dies before her daughter's marriage, the valuables to which she would have been entitled are given to the representative of her clan (her father, brother, sister, uncle, etc.)

In case of divorce the husband must be reimbursed for these valuables as far all the rest; but the restitution must be made by the mother's clan, who has received them.

If the husband does not have the valuables for the mother on hand, he gives her a pledge for the payment (wɛ̃ɛa; verb, ɛ̃ɛya), consisting of one or two knives or bakonga. He could never settle

585 a palaver concerning the bride price without giving at least this
•731 pledge. He will then fulfill this obligation as quickly as possible, because most mothers-in-law are so eager for this payment that if the son-in-law is too slow in giving them satisfaction, they do everything to break up the marriage. And often they succeed. They will win their case before the tribunal, unless they have been too short of patience.

Article VI. Presents, or Bofogo

After the bulk of the bride price has been paid to the wife's mother and father, her parents as well as various other members of the family demand various small payments and presents called bofogo (sing. bofogo) from the husband. The noun is derived from the verb
[372] -bfoga which is only used with it. An analogous reciprocal form, -bfogana means "to touch one another, to collide." Was the original meaning of -bfoga "to attract to oneself?" Or are the two verbs totally unconnected etymologically? Whatever the case, these terms are also used to denote the remuneration received by judges for settling a dispute. [148]

There are many varieties of bofogo; some are used by particular groups and unknown elsewhere. The various relatives claim them without following any predetermined order. But in any case it is necessary to go through the ndonga. Each relative therefore tells him what he wishes in a voice loud enough for everyone present to hear; and it is the ndonga who passes the request on to the husband. "Give this or that bofogo to so-and-so," he will say. Note also that the payment of these bofogo is not absolutely essential. Often requests are only partially fulfilled; others may be refused with some excuse, "In-law, I cannot satisfy you; I do not possess such an object." Thus the marriage arrangement is neither hindered nor delayed because everybody cannot be satisfied. The principal bofogo for the father (1) and sometimes that of the mother (2) are exceptions.

Let us go into some of the particulars concerning the various bofogo thus requested:

1) Ifeka l'ekpaka b'a'nyɔnɔ, "knife and spears for the girl's father." This consists of a knife and five spears (or more, depending

583 on the husband's wealth). Theoretically, the knife should be an efamba.
● 431 In practice it is sometimes possible to substitute an empɛ̂te in an
[412] attractive wooden sheath amply adorned with "copper-plated nails."
At other times the knife and spears may be replaced by their corresponding value in bakonga. This is considered the most important
[675] boɛ̂ngo, and therefore no one gives up his claim to it. If the son-in-law cannot present it to his father-in-law immediately, he promises to do so later, and his father-in-law does not fail to make use of any opportunity to remind him of his promise. Some men insist on a wɛ́ko as pledge. Others are satisfied with a piece of loasi or a bosɔ̂ngɔ́ (splinter or part of the trunk of a palm tree), which the husband gives to the ndonga as a token of acknowledgement of his debt and as evidence of his willingness to pay it as soon as he has the means. Some men, however, insist so strongly on the boɛ̂ngo that they will not accept the walo [146] before they have received it. Thus, one day recently, Lomanga d'Ifutɔ́ (Bongili) refused to accept the walo for his daughter Ekofo, engaged to Bokungɛ́ w'akɛ́yɛ́ (of Bongili, Ndongɔ). He insisted that the father of the latter, Bokungɛ́ w'is'ɛ́y'-Ingilá first go back to get his boɛ̂ngo. Since he was unable to find five spears, he substituted for them a second knife and a copper ring. these were accepted by old Lomanga. Shortly thereafter the same thing happened to Bokungɛ́ of Bontole (Bongili), who wanted to pay the walo for his fiancée Ngelɛ́ of Bofimbo (Bombwanja), the sister of Bongondɛ́, clerk of the Bombwanja. The woman's family refused to take the bride price before receiving the ifaká l'akongá b'is'ɛ́y'ɔ́na boɛ̂ngo.

2) Byĭkɔ́ bya nyang'ɛ́y'ɔ́na, "porcupines for the mother."
[251] This present consists of two or three fresh or smoked porcupine. Bɛ̂tomba, baatá birds, or bekɔ́sa fish may be substituted for them. The substitution of hens is not well regarded, because they are within the realm of the nkomi. If someone does not have the means to satisfy this requirement, he gives the mother two copper rings saying mɔ́ká bakonga bɔ́fɛ́ yɔ́ombe byĭkɔ́ bikɛ́, "here are two copper rings; go and buy yourself some porcupines." Fabrics are sometimes substituted nowadays.

One must be careful not to confuse this boongo with byiko byã nyang'ɛ́y'ɔnɔ, an expression frequently heard. The latter includes any payment to the mother and includes the goat and the nkando as well as the boongo discussed above and others. The word used in this case is not byikó, singular ikó, "porcupine," but rather byiko, singular wiko, "price, value" and derived from the verb -ika, "to set a price."

3) Lokolí: a brother or a cousin of the wife asks for a konga. He beats the gong (lokolí) in order to make noise and thus force the husband to satisfy him. That is how this boongo seems to have originated. In practice people simply demand a [147] present. The racket can sometimes last for quite a while. But the elders do not allow the gathering to be disrupted if the husband does not have precisely the gift that would give satisfaction.

4) Bakulí, or botówé: the woman's brothers stick a piece of the trunk of a banana tree (botówé) into the ground, so that young relatives of the husband may shoot arrows (bakulí) at it. These are then removed by young members of the wife's family who, at the present time, are sometimes given money -- 5 francs, for instance.

[288] [121] 5) Wambé: prisoner's rope, that is, a rope to which war prisoners were formerly tied, two by two (a system now imitated for prisoners of the colonial law enforcement agencies and administration). In the past the patriarch, or head of the family, demanded a konga or a knife as indemnity against the possibility that he or members of his family might be imprisoned as a result of a war caused by the woman being married. Nowadays the chiefs set up by the administration and [171] [427] given the rights of family heads by the European authority have also claimed rights to this boongo whose significance, purpose, and even name have completely changed as a result. It is now called konyolía w'ɛ́nkɔnji, "the chief's chain." It is clear that this payment has become something which it was not meant to be.

6) Etúka: a heavy wooden fork, fastened to the neck. This is a present claimed by the mother, by one of the father's other wives, or by a wife of the woman's brother, against the possibility that they may have to undergo torture by means of the fork because of the women whose bride price is being paid. This could happen if she were

to leave her husband and he, in revenge, were to lay hands on her mother or on one of the other wives of the clan. (1) [148]

1. See Chapter VI, Article VII, 4, (1), and Chapter VIII, Article II, 1.

7) Lombé: a wide shoulder strap made of fur or braided bokombo reeds (Calamus sp.), though valuables of equal worth (one knife or a konga) may be given. Nowadays this bofongo consists of 2 or 3 rings; it goes to the mother in compensation for the wearying burden of carrying and nursing her daughter. (1)

1. Note that when a mother-in-law brings a child into the world, her son-in-law sends her a shoulder strap of liengé otterskin or a konga of equivalent value. He does not repeat this gift at each birth, however.

8) Betótswé bya nkwé: leaves of the bonkongé bush used to remove, wipe off, and carry away (otsa) a child's excrement. This bofongo consists of a ring and goes to the mother as compensation for her performance of these tasks. In the absence of the mother, it is claimed by another of the father's wives or by a female relative of the mother.

9) The bojéngé, "hunting net," is demanded in many villages for no special reason. Certain clans, however, scoffed at by others because they have few members, officially ask a man belonging to one of the latter and wishing to marry one of their daughters to bring a net, saying: *"You make fun of us because we have no people; bring us a hunting net to surround and enclose us, since we are not many."* Thus the village of Boyela of the Bokéala, never gives one of its members in marriage without this bofongo.

10) Wéngé w'ékúé: a bofongo which is not known everywhere but which is customary in certain groups,-for example among the Bokéala. One of the woman's relatives takes a piece of a young thorny trunk of the wéngé tree. Having scraped one end of it, he holds this

end in his hand and offers the other to the husband, saying, "Take-it." The husband naturally refuses and extricates himself by means of a knife or a piece of copper. [149]

11) bofingo w'iyau, or "weeds." These are demanded by some clans because the husband's clan scoffs at them on account of the number of weeds and chaff they allow to grow in their village instead of keeping it clean. One or two rings are given.

12) Engumbá: known in some groups, such as the Ekáfale, where it is the last one demanded. It is a bofingo of authority. (1)

1. An engumbá is a temporary hut in a newly settled village. The family patriarchs are the first who must go and live there in order to urge the others to follow and to exorcise all the evil of possible magic spells.

claimed by the patriarchs of the families belonging to the grouping from which the woman has come. Formerly, the amount went as high as 3 to 5 bakonga, depending on the number of families, groups of families, or clans related through marriage that were living in the same village. Now the payment is made primarily in European currency, and the amount may be 50 francs, for example. This bofingo is later divided among the various kin groupings related to the wife's family.

Various male and female relatives of the woman ask for assorted small objects, such as a small knife (ifeka), a native razor (lotáf), a pin for braiding hair (bofingf), a needle (mongf), a necklace of blue beads (biongfo), etc.

Nowadays many other objects are also demanded: clothing, dishes, etc. Thus, one day on the occasion of a single bride-price payment, I heard demands for the following objects:

For the father, a pair of trousers and a jacket, because when the woman was a young child she soiled his clothing without troubling herself about the matter.

For the mother, a bed, because worries about her daughter often kept her from resting.

For an aunt, a basin, because she had washed the child.

For a brother, a pair of shoes or slippers, because the girl had worn his shoes during the courtship, etc., etc. [150]

All these befuga are included in the sum total of the bride price. Should the occasion arise, they must be returned with the rest.

In addition to the befuga asked for and received by the woman's relatives, others are demanded by members of the husband's family. As in the case of the former each person voices his claims according to his desires and without any predetermined order but must always do so through the ndonga. The gifts chiefly consist of furs of the otter, the lotka monkey, bonkila and yowi felines, a joint of game (money, antelope, etc.), a mat, a pot, a hunting net, a carrying bag (bokimbi), a bead necklace, etc. Nowadays there may also be various items introduced by the Europeans: items of clothing, fabrics, saucepans, dishes, etc. This category of befuga is included in the sum total of the nkumi (see the following article). If the nkumi is given immediately, the parties proceed with this payment. Then the ndonga(s) are remunerated as stated above: each party gives him at least 2 rings.

Finally, the woman's father says to the husband: "In any case, be on your way; we will collect the nkumi and bring it to you." Whereupon the husband leaves. If he prefers to wait for his wife he remains, and returns home when the items of the nkumi have been collected.

Article VII. Nkumi

Nkumi is the name for the objects which the wife's family gives to the husband. The term likonga is also sometimes used. The Ja'Mbô say likoma, the W'ongani, Bokôtô, Ikondo, and Bokôngô say likomi. All these words are derived from the same verb -koma, "to wrap up, to make a package." (1) for the nkumi valuables are

1. The Bjôrô say likonga from the verb -konga, which has the same meaning as -koma.

generally packed in baskets or [151] in bongonjo (or betsete), which are baskets woven of palm leaves.

Some ethnologists have introduced the expression douaire, "dowry," (1) to designate the goods given by the woman's family to

1. See for example Torday, in Africa, Vol. 2, no. 3, p. 279.

the man's family. Actually, the word dot would be a much better translation, because it corresponds more closely to the nature of these payments. But this would require changing the terminology adopted, and the introduction of another term (such as marriage payment) for what is generally understood by the word dot, whose use is in any case unfortunate. [Translator's note: Hulstaert uses dot, which would literally be translated into English as "dowry," to designate the payments made by the husband and his family to the wife's family. However, I have employed the term "bride price" in accordance with the usage of English-speaking anthropologists.]

Furthermore, the word douaire already has a precise and accepted meaning, so that its use in this context would lead to confusion. That is why I prefer provisionally to use an entirely new term, and to translate nkomf as contre-dot [literally, counter-dowry]. (2)

2. This term was suggested to me by Attorney General A. Sohier.

[Translator's note: The term "dowry" has been used to designate this payment in the translation.]

The nkomf consists of hens, ducks (3), salt, mats, pots, gourds

3. Ducks have been introduced fairly recently; the Nkundó maintain that their ancestors did not have any, and that they got them from the Bkonda. In their classification they place them under the category of chickens.

583 and, if the woman's family is wealthy, a goat and formerly even a
491 slave. Nowadays, objects of European manufacture are also given.

To give the impression of being a great lord, an unusually
563 wealthy family head sometimes gave human beings as a dowry. These were preferably Batwá or, if possible, dependents (Mpámá) who only changed masters up to a certain point. Actually it was the father's intention to glorify his daughter by turning them over to her; they had to assist her through various services, and her descendants became their "owners."

Thus Mpumo, one of the ancestors of the Boéndé (of the Bomwanja tribe) had received the slave, Bonkótuló, as part of the nkámá from Ilólé, father of his wife, [152] Lifomi of Mbéngá (Lóló, Ekonda). The descendants of this slave comprise the Bonkótambélé and Bantha clan [sic], who have settled with the Bondjo and the Bongangá. (1)

1. See also the example cited in Chapter III, Article V.

583 Even real estate can be included in the nkámá. Thus a fish-
491 ing territory (such as a stream, creek, pond, fishing holes) or a sec-
425 tion of a palm grove may be given (2). Like the gift of human beings,

2. But never land or forests.

such property is given only by a very wealthy family head. If he is not sole owner (and in practice he can be only in the case of fishing territory), he must obtain in advance the consent of the co-owners, whether they be brothers or heads of other families. Since it must be assumed that he is intelligent enough not to give away a piece of property which they themselves need, he always obtains their consent. In fact, anyone who opposed the gift would be considered to have acted maliciously toward the woman, who is also his "daughter," in depriving her of this source of pride.

The objects given as nkámá are the property of the husband. The greatest part of it he gives to his wife's nkílo, that is to the

female relative thanks to whom he was able to obtain this wife (see below, Article X). He keeps a small part for himself and, in agreement with his wife, uses it according to his needs. When husband and wife are on good terms, he consults her before giving away or selling any of it. And if she wishes to dispose of any of it, she asks his permission. Thus they work the matter out amiably. But legally it all belongs to the husband. Should he want to use it for gifts or for any payment of his own, his wife can make no claim; she will not win her case before the law. But from a practical point of view, it is much wiser to come to an agreement in advance and thus avoid any annoyance or quarrel.

The size of the nkomf depends on the wealth of the woman's parents. Not only is a large one a point [152] of honor and esteem; it is also a means of increasing the stability of the marriage and securing harmony. The bigger the nkomf the more obliged the husband is to treat his wife well and see that she is content with him, out of fear of having to return the entire fortune if the marriage should ever be broken.

The nkomf may be very large, even as great or greater than the bride price; in these extreme cases the girl is spoken of as lifaya-njoku, for like an elephant (njoku) she goes to live elsewhere (lifaya) because of all the riches she carries with her. The term njokwobwo is also used; literally, it refers to a kind of mushroom which grows in abundance all over the bosfid tree. (1)

1. The use of these terms is not specifically confined to the situation described above. They are also applied to any stranger who settles in, or simply passes through, the village, bringing many riches -- to the white men, for example.

With reference to this subject an old custom should be mentioned. Because of his love for his daughter and a desire for renown, a father might give his son-in-law a quantity of bakonga, in varying amounts but enough to pay for the acquisition of a wife, hence bride-price valuables, so to speak.

583 Although given by the father-in-law to his son-in-law and therefore
●43| part of the nkomf, yet these valuables have neither their significance
556 nor their purpose. They are disbursed at the time of the payment of the ikulf. This practice was customary only among men who were unusually wealthy and influential, that is, family heads who occupied prominent positions in native society. It was never omitted for a bolimbd (see Chapter I, Part 2, Article II). The woman's father gave these valuables to his son-in-law, saying: "I am giving you my daughter in marriage. She has always occupied a high position; she is of a very good family. I want her to retain her prominent rank. Therefore here is a bride price; go and get yourself a second wife with these rings, so that my daughter will have her nkita [154] from the very first day. Then come back and pay me the bride price for her."

The woman who was honored by such preferential treatment was called yĕngaende. This word is composed of the roots ĕng, "to acquire by means of a bride price," and ende, "a man (vir)." The name comes from the fact that she herself paid the price for her husband, so to speak, and did so even before he paid the bride price for her.

The Nkundó have given up this manner of ostentatiously dis-
[18] playing their wealth, so that the custom we have just described now belongs to the past. Nevertheless there are still women who bear the
[55] name Yĕngaende, in memory of some ancestor who had been the object of this honor which put her in a privileged position, a royal position, so to speak.

587 From all the foregoing it will be apparent that marriage payments are not unilateral in Nkundó law and practice. Rather, there is a mutual handing over of goods. Although the goods given by each party differ clearly from one another, they all have an economic and financial value. Therefore we can speak of a real reciprocity in these payments. And although the husband has to furnish the largest and highest amount, it would be wrong to say that he alone must "pay for his spouse," for though he does actually "pay for his wife," she must to a certain extent "pay for her husband." That is what the

585 178 probably due to the penetration of the Lombwanja dialect and its rather strong influence, even in relation to other words, on the dialect of the Bongili and Bonkoso, as well as in central Flandria.] Among the Bombwanja, -eng and bondongo are synonyms of the Lokóté -éng, éngí. For the payment of a slave they use only the word ilengé and the expression -lekya ilengé, "to give a slave." But the old people loudly protest against this confusion and consider it an error, a mix-up, a corruption of the language.

585 The bondongo used to be paid at the same time as the walo or shortly thereafter. Nowadays years may pass between the two payments. If the husband is too slow in meeting his obligation, the wife's family complains. Often when their daughter visits her parents, they prevent her from returning to her husband as a means of coercing him into making the payment. As in the case of the éngí, it is up to the husband to bring the payment; the wife's family is not expected to fetch it.

We have said that copper rings may be substituted for the slave. No other objects -- such as knives, for example -- come under consideration. If the rings are to be counted as bondongo, they must be explicitly designated as such by the husband or by the ndonga. If the intention is not verbally expressed they will be considered éngí, since they are the kind of valuables used for the latter payments.

585 931 The bondongo is the final and definitive bride-price payment. This does not mean that the husband does not thereafter have to pay in certain circumstances. On the contrary, financial transactions are terminated only by death. But [161] subsequent payments spring from other obligations which follow the final completion of the marriage agreement though they result from it. Such are, for instance, the belonga (gifts brought when visiting), valuables given at the time of a death, the okunji (funeral payment), and assistance to members of the wife's family (for example, in the settlement of a bride price). Or perhaps the wife's mother comes to help her daughter at childbirth; when she goes back home her son-in-law gives her a farewell present (bolingaka), such as 4 belonga. The statement of natives that the éngí never ends -- éngí lifolile elaká ekíwé -- should be interpreted in the light of these practices.

428 Two sisters, Osɔ̆ka and Bosɔ̆kankele of Ikengo, Ntɔ̆mbɔ̆
587 (Wăngatɔ̆), were married respectively to Ekɔ̆bɔ̆ of Likɔ̆ala (Besombɔ̆, Bombwanja) and Bokungɔ̆ of Bombɛ̆nga wă Ikolɛ̆ (Besombɛ̆. Nganja married Bolɔ̆mbɔ̆ of Lɔ̆mbo (Bonkoso). When Bolɔ̆mbɔ̆ became a widow she was inherited by Likɔ̆ndɔ̆, the first cousin of the deceased on his mother's side, so that the patrimony would not be scattered. She gave Likɔ̆ndɔ̆ a daughter, Bosukankele, whose bride price he used to get himself a wife, Bombɔ̆la (Teresa), daughter of Ilito of Bolɛ̆ngɛ̆ (Bongĭli). At Likɔ̆ndɔ̆'s death the rights returned to Ntombɔ̆ (Joseph) in the person of the widow Bombɔ̆la, the nkita of his uterine sister.

587 If the legitimate heir, or some other close relative of the de-
428 ceased, wants to marry a widow, he consults the head of the family
589 and then goes to the woman's parents and gives them bekooli (1),

1. The plural of the noun derived from the verb koola, "to seek, to take for someone," hence, "objects in order to go and take someone."

which consists of 1 to 3 copper rings, added to the amount of the bride price. This gift shows the suitor's respect for the woman's family. (2) If after a time the woman no longer wants to stay with

2. In addition to this native interpretation another may be given which is more profound and of a legal nature. This will be done further on (Article IX).

him, but loves another close relative, the latter also brings his bekooli. This is expected of him even if the woman has not gone home in between, but has gone directly from one man to the other.
[191] [191] The bekooli of the first man are then returned.
If the new husband is only distantly related to the deceased, (1)

[601]

1. In that case he is called edto ɛ̆ɛ̆ mɔ̆ngɛ̆, literally "relative from the summit," as against edto ɛ̆ɛ̆ ɛ̆fɔ̆la, "relative of the base," therefore a close relative.

428 583x 587 against eɔto ɛâ ntsíma, "relative of the base," therefore a close relative.

●431 he must not only bring bekooli to the woman's parents but also give a bompángá called msǎsangɔ́ or bosangɔ́jwá a goat, a dog, or 5 to 10 copper rings, depending on the circumstances) to the heir. This is not part of the bride price, which is a payment to the woman's family. It is a gift intended to assuage the feelings of the heir and to secure or strengthen his good will. It is equivalent to a request for permission to cohabit with this woman and to profit by her work.

428 587 Thus we must distinguish between two types of marriage by inheritance:

1) The new husband and heir belongs to the immediate family of the deceased; he is eɔto ɛâ ntsína -- a son, brother, uncle, nephew, or cousin.

2) The new husband and heir is distantly related; he is eɔto ɛâ nsɔ́ngɛ́.

In the first instance the marriage is considered fairly stable and difficult to break, but nevertheless more easily dissolved than a marriage by nkumbɔ́. With how much difficulty it is dissolved depends on the degree of kinship. The reason given by the Nkundɔ́ for the greater ease with which such a marriage is broken is that the heir-husband did not himself pay the bride price; he only received the woman from someone else. Thus, if he no longer wants her, he justifies sending her away by saying, "It was not I personally who paid your bride price." For her part, the woman will invoke the same reason, mutatis mutandis. In all other respects the union is like a marriage by nkumbɔ́. Therefore, [192] when the woman leaves her husband the term kɔ́fa is used here as in the case of a marriage by nkumbɔ́.

428 587 471 The second type of marriage by inheritance is clearly different from the first. The new husband is not a husband from the legal standpoint; he is only a husband in the improper sense, physically. In spite of the msǎsangɔ́ paid by the common-law husband, the legitimate heirs, hence the close kin of the deceased, especially the relative who was entitled to the woman and to whom she was given when the

428 This practice of ndálaka likílɔ́ is not without disadvantages.
587 It may be feared that the heir deny that the payments were made and refuse to reimburse the man for them. His refusal is facilitated by the fact that the ndonga involved is the same one who participated in arranging the marriage agreement. Thus, there is a tendency to omit the practice.

Note that the expression ndálaka likílɔ́ is not applied only to this situation; it is also used in the obvious sense -- for instance, when the man is simply to make the acquaintance of the woman's
[431] family without presenting any payment (though of course it is in-
[574] conceivable that such a visit would be made without bringing presents), or in the case of a man who wants to be united with a relative of the wife of one of his relatives or friends.

4) Any presents given by the woman's family to the common-
[431] law husband, for instance during a visit or for a service rendered, etc., do not belong to him; by right they go to the heirs. If the latter are kindly disposed toward him, they will allow him the usufruct of a portion of these goods, but he has no right to them strictly speaking.

429 5) If the woman breaks this union the verb used is not -kɔ́fa
586 but -kumbwa, "to be taken in [194] marriage." If she returns to a
587 close relative of the deceased, that is, to one of his bankɔ́lɔ́, the Nkundɔ́ say that "she has returned to her husband," aɔ́lut'ɛ́ka bɔ́m'ɔ́kɛ́ɛ́. For his part, the man who has taken the woman in common-law marriage may repudiate her at any time. He says to her: kendɛ́ ɛ́ka baɔ́m'-ɛ́kɛ́, emí ntsíkwɛ́ngɛ́ki, "go to your husbands; I did not pay your bride price." The valuables he has given as nsásangɔ́ will be *refunded*.

6) Lastly, if the woman dies while living with this man, he has to pay an indemnity (-fɔma mbɛ́laka), usually a slave or its equivalent, to the legitimate heirs.

428 Thus the second type of marriage by inheritance has none of
587 the characteristics of a legitimate Nkundɔ́ marriage. The husband has only the enjoyment of the woman. Only the heir of the deceased may truly and legally call her his "wife." Usually a woman involved in such a union is called the heir's "thing" (yɔ́mba). The heir is called her "owner," her "master," and the term "husband" is reserved for the man who cohabits with her.

428 587 581 On the other hand, it also happens sometimes, and even quite often, that although the woman loves her "husband" (in the improper sense) she does not want any change. At heart she remains attached to the kin of her deceased husband, through her love for him or because of her affection for his family, who have always treated her well. It is not unusual for the common-law husband to encounter unalterable opposition to a regular marriage. The woman may [198] [578] even take such offense at the proposal that she will leave the man for a close relative of the deceased.

In this type of situation another sort of development may also occur, although it is quite rare. For example, there is the case of Lowâka, daughter of Bompâkî of Bontole. After the death of her husband, Botîna of the Basêka Ilîka (Lofelî), she was taken in marriage by one of his relatives, Nsenge, who gave the prescribed besangôjwâ to Imomo of Bofalambôka, Botîna's bonankîmî. After a certain time Imomo, who had had a slight palaver with Nsenge, did not want the situation to continue. He demanded a regular marriage so that he could make use of his rights to Lowâka's bride price. Nsenge agreed and paid 60 bakonga to the woman's parents, who reimbursed Imomo. Imomo returned the besangôjwâ he had received, and thus Lowâka became the true wife of Nsenge.

One can see that the gamut of individual variations comes into play here, depending on the temperament and the feelings of the persons involved. But the most common practice is for the widow to remain attached to the family of the deceased or to remarry in the prescribed fashion.

In the latter case the widow goes to a man who is not related to the deceased, either immediately after mourning or after a period of conjugal life with the heir. The latter is entitled to a reimbursement of the bride price. The new husband must make all the customary payments through the medium of his own nkonga, exactly as he would for a first marriage by nkumbô. Consequently, this union is not considered a "marriage by inheritance," with which it has nothing in common.

428 587 431 In any marriage by inheritance -- that is, where no bride price payment is involved -- the husband, whether he be the heir or

simply a relative of the deceased, must give the woman a present called isangó, or inheritance gift. The woman either hands this gift over to her family or keeps it for her personal needs. In any case [199] it is not considered a part of the bride price.

Finally, when a widow remarries, either by inheritance or by a new nkumbó, her husband must make her a present of one or two rings or knives of equivalent value before having conjugal relations with her. This present is given either on the same day as the isangó or on another, depending on the circumstances. It is called bofongé, "couch," or, more commonly, ikondeyantangé (from -kondeya, "to make someone get on," and ntangé "bed"). It is a gift of consolation for widowhood. This gift of ikondeyantangé is probably what Engels referred to in his study on the Wángata we have already cited, when he spoke of "buying off mourning."

An examination of marriage by inheritance shows that the widow is free to remarry a man of her choice, whether he be the heir or another relative of the deceased or some stranger. The only exception is a woman who has been willed to someone by the deceased. (1)

> 1. The Nkundó scrupulously observe the stipulations of a will (boango or bowâlo) because they fear the vengeance of the deceased. When a person expresses his last wishes he usually adds the threat, "If you don't carry out my wishes, you will follow me in death."

If the heir subsequently does not fulfill his obligations toward her, she can react the same way as in a marriage by nkumbó. As for the special case of the hostél, we will deal with it separately.

Another law may be deduced from the facts observed: as long as no new bride price is paid, the woman continues to belong to the family of the deceased. Only a restitution of the bride price breaks the contract and destroys all its consequences. (2)

> 2. We will come back to these points in Article IX, and in Chapters VIII and IX.

gravity of the situation. In general, the wife's parents judge impartially, because they value the stability of the marriage. If the husband feels that he has been wronged, he can always appeal to the ndonga, but ordinarily there is no need to do so and the matter is settled in a friendly fashion and in private. If the woman is found to be in the wrong, her parents scold her and take her to task. Provided with some gift (two or three bakonga, for example), they return her to her husband, advising her to behave in a more suitable fashion in the future. Should she resist, her parents will not hesitate to use threats and curses, and these seldom fail to have their effect. Nowadays women have become more emancipated, and it does sometimes happen that such a woman will scorn her parents' decision, especially if she has a lover somewhere beyond the reach of family justice. If it is the husband who is in the wrong, his wife will not go back with him until he has begged her to do so by paying a few copper rings or other valuables, the amount depending on the seriousness of the situation. This act on the husband's part is expressed by the verb lɔnda [271] and the noun lɔ̀ndɔ́, terms which do not apply specifically to this case only but are used whenever pardon is asked for a serious offense. This payment is not a fine or indemnity; it is more closely equivalent to the apologies and reactions customary among Europeans.

At the present time some women go back to their families for very slight reasons. Freedom and a greater ease of communication, together with a desire for emancipation, which is no longer held back by the rein of ancestral sanctions, are the cause for this state of affairs. They are still held back somewhat by the risk of a rupture of the marriage, a possibility which they generally would rather not see realized, especially if the bride price is quite large.

In the past, if a woman was married a short distance away from her parents, she could always run away to them when there were domestic disputes. Even if the route led through other villages, it was always possible to take a direct path through the forest, for such paths exist everywhere; they go around the villages in between so that, in case of conflict or danger of examination, a traveler can go his way without being seen. When a woman was married into a

with reference to the young wife of his junior. (1)

1. The second component of this term is used by some Elinga as a synonym of bokilô. It should be related to walé, a term which among the Mbole and the Bakutu denotes a girl who is boléméc or a woman who has just given birth (the same is true among the Ekonda).

The present practice is to exclude from among the bakilô these persons with whom marriage is permitted. They are more frequently called "husband" or "wife."

The opposite of bokilô is bokanga. The bakanga are members of the family that has received the bride price, while the bakilô are those who have paid it. In common practice the word bokilô is often used in place of bokanga, but never the reverse. Bokilô l'okanga is the expression denoting the whole group.

1. Father-in-law and mother-in-law

A husband owes respect, love, and assistance to his parents-in-law. This point is vital to harmony in the home. In this sphere a wife is very intolerant [287] of forgetfulness and even more of ill will. Offensive comments, insults pointed at parents-in-law even in their absence result in serious difficulties. Sometimes a husband expresses his bad humor or anger against his spouse in that way. This kind of behavior never wins approval, unless his in-laws first insulted him. The law of retaliation applies fully in this situation. The Nkundô say: dowé mbéngé l'ôndambe oléngaka ôk'ôndambe, "He who replies to evil comments is in the right, not the one who began." For a fuller discussion of this topic, see above (Article III).

To remain on good terms with his parents-in-law, the husband must visit them from time to time. By the very nature of things, his visits are less frequent than those of his wife. One reason why they cannot be too frequent is that the husband must bring gifts at each visit (belonga). One does not go to one's parents-in-law empty-handed.

The extent of the riches brought depends on circumstances. Some greedy persons hope for large gifts if their daughter's marriage proves stable. Others prefer not to receive too much, lest they be required to give back an equal amount and -- if they are not especially wealthy -- thus find themselves one day in great financial difficulties. For the [517] belonga are added to the sum total of the bride price and must therefore be restored, should the occasion arise.

The parents-in-law do not allow their son-in-law to depart without giving him countergifts as a farewell (belingaka). These take the form of hens and ducks, and their value is added to the total amount of nkomi.

Neither son-in-law nor parents-in-law like to see the generosity of the other party exceed their own, except in a few unusual cases. As a matter of fact, this is a very intelligent policy: equality is maintained on both sides, so that there can be no reproaches on the grounds of greed or stinginess [288], and if the marriage should be dissolved, it would be easy to re-establish equilibrium.

A son-in-law is expected to help his father-in-law to an extent which varies with the situation and with his means. He may fell the trees of the forest for him or set up a field, he may build him a house or make a hunting enclosure (lokombe), etc. A good son-in-law never fails to fulfill these obligations, and the father-in-law does not let him leave without having given him some present.

It is very important to a wife that her husband acquit himself conscientiously of these duties of visiting and assisting her parents. His failure to do so would lead to serious palavers and their usual consequences.

The father-in-law, for his part, does not fail to help his son-in-law in his various tasks. When the work is completed, the latter gives him a belingaka of a few copper rings, which are included in belonga.

The visits of a woman's parents to their son-in-law are more frequent. It is their way of showing their love for him and their daughter and their interest in the household. The visits can last weeks and months, whether only one or both of the parents come. If they stay too long, they are accepted with less enthusiasm. Gifts (belingaka) must always be brought out when the farewells are said.

606 574 576 578 Even if the parents' union has been dissolved and the mother has remarried, she does not cease to visit her daughter and son-in-law. If her new husband seems not to agree to her going, difficulties result. And if he does not change his attitude, his behavior may cause his wife to leave him in order to return to her first husband, the girl's father.

576 577 578 579 Thus, visits are accompanied by an exchange of gifts which are <u>belonga</u> if given by the son-in-law, and part of the <u>olgmf</u> valuables if given by the father-in-law. Farewell gifts are <u>belonga</u> [288] and part of the bride price if given by the son-in-law, part of the <u>olgmf</u> if given by the father-in-law.

These same rules apply, <u>mutatis mutandis</u>, to various relatives on each side with respect to visits made, services rendered, and presents given on these occasions.

606 One very strict law regarding relations between son-in-law and parents-in-law should be noted: a man is forbidden to see the face of his wife's mother. This prohibition is scrupulously observed by all. He is allowed to see her face only once, at the beginning of the marriage, "to learn to know her so that they can avoid each other." If, for example, they meet while traveling in the forest, they must turn their backs to each other. Usually the woman turns her face toward the edge of the path to let her son-in-law pass. They greet each other by word of mouth, ask for each other's news, but do not shake hands or look at each other. It is funny for us to see a woman visiting her son-in-law. The two place themselves on each side of a partition or in two corners, and they talk in that way, asking for news, carrying on a discussion, etc., without seeing each other. Sometimes mother-in-law and son-in-law find themselves in each other's presence unexpectedly, in the forest or in the fields, without having seen each other approach or having been warned by anyone. They immediately turn their backs on each other; the man excuses himself and quickly disappears, even if to do so he has to plunge into a dense forest full of prickly and tangled creepers.

This law extends also to the husband's very close relatives, such as his younger brothers (who are also "husbands"), and to all

[87] [196] 4) To indicate a tendency toward adultery (especially on the part of women) the Nkundó use the verb tɛ̂ɛka which literally denotes clothing that is too big and that flies in the wind. The noun lɔyɔ́ or lɔyɔ́ is also used.

The verb used for discovering a case of adultery is ɛ́mbɔ́lɔ́lɔ, the noun is ɛ́mbɔ́lɔ́.

Occasional or permanent adultery has always been very common. This fact is undoubtedly due to the relative ease with which it is possible to escape discovery and consequent sanctions. A woman [57] going to visit her family cannot possibly be followed or watched by her husband; the distances make such surveillance difficult and, furthermore, it would have disastrous consequences for the stability of the marriage, since neither the woman nor her family would put up with it. Other partial causes are lasciviousness, polygamy, etc., as we will see later in the text.

2. Gifts

[87] [431] [441] An adulterous man and woman send each other presents. his consist of meat, arrows, etc., hens of food and various small objects. A woman's gifts to her lover are called lɔ́ɔ́mbɔ (the noun used with the verb tʊ́mba, "to make love" (1). Very young relatives

> 1. Note that the noun and the verb are not etymologically related. Perhaps lɔ́ɔ́mbɔ might be related to ɛ́mba, "to show, to designate." The Ekonda call this gift ɛ́lɔ́ka. See Chapter II, Article 1.

generally serve as intermediaries. Note that a woman rarely sends her son, for she has reason to fear that the gift would not reach its destination; the boy would give himself a treat with it. She can have more confidence in a daughter.

A man's gift is called by the generic term mpɛ́nd, "a gift that is sent, a dispatch." [31.8]

In isolated cases (yɛ́nɛ) a man sends an arrow, some small object, beads, meat, etc. Nowadays money or cloth have been

837 493 substituted for all these items. As a rule the woman demands some remuneration although there are exceptions, which may be frequent or rare, depending on the region and on the nature of the persons involved. They are due to extraordinary passion or to the woman's love for her lover. (1)

1. See Chapter I, Part 1, Article IV.

3. Evidence of adultery

737 689 The strength of the evidence may vary.

1) The strongest evidence is finding the couple in flagrante delicto. No objection will hold up against it, and it constitutes for the application of the severest sanctions. The act must be observed by the husband. The testimony of a third party is never introduced. If another person discovers the adultery and favors the husband, that person will inform the latter so that he can take precautions in order to catch the culprits personally. If it is discovered by the woman's father or other close relative who favors the husband, [606] he informs the latter and, if possible, calls him to witness the infraction himself. If he does so, the husband must give the indemnity to his father-in-law. This is not a legal obligation but one imposed by good relations and decorum, since the father-in-law has shown good will and affection toward his son-in-law.

2) A wife's admission is almost as important and always decisive. Such a confession mitigates her husband's anger toward her and directs it chiefly toward her accomplice. Therefore most women do not hesitate to denounce their paramours if they feel somewhat censured. (On the other hand, women never denounce each other.) [314]

3) A third form of evidence can be obtained by surprising the lovers while they are planning a meeting. The husband can accuse them on the spot and try to extract a complete confession from his wife on the subject of the past or the future. If possible he assures himself of the co-operation of witnesses. If he foresees a denial on his wife's part, he lets the occasion pass and looks for a good opportunity to surprise the culprits in the act. Regardless of the

837 age mates, the friendship pact has no connection with the wives of
572 the men involved. If [335] there is a very firm friendship between them, one may lend his wife to the other in some situation or other, but this is a fairly rare occurrence. The Nkundó say that the boeka relationship is for mutual assistance only.

If a case of adultery occurs, the husband has every right to demand an indemnity, but if the occurrence is not repeated, he never goes to extremes, and, because of the friendship, he may ask as little as 2 or 3 rings. If the occurrences are repeated without reciprocity, however, the husband often makes a great to-do; he demands a large indemnity and breaks the friendship pact.

Instead of demanding an indemnity some men give their
●[336] friend a gift (mpóli) asking him to stop the illicit relations. Often this action is but a subterfuge to relax the other's vigilance so that, feeling freer, he will be more easily apprehended.

837 Between persons bearing the same name (ndoí, pl. bandoí). (1)
551

1. See Chapter I, Part 1, Article III.

there is no free access to wives, nor are persons of opposite sexes ever considered ndoí. Such relations would be considered concubinage or pure and simple adultery.

To summarize, a certain freedom of access to each other's
837 wives exists among age mates, but it is subject to the expressed or tacit consent of the respective husbands. These relations are not considered adulterous. Such freedom does not exist with respect to other categories of persons. But these, nevertheless, had to be mentioned here because the similarity among the kinds of relationship discussed might produce errors in the reader's mind, and because in certain parts of the Congo such persons fall into the same category as Nkundó age mates.

2. Concubinage

595* Concubinage (called lisámbi among the Bolote, isóka
837 among the Bombwanja as well as the Ekonda) is a union [336] between

"the concubinage came out," (the intransitive of the verb is *ela*), or 317 *leja* (*lela*) *lisafumbi*, "to bring out into daylight, to make public."

The payment for the right of concubinage is called *lomyélingo*, although it may also be designated simply by the term *lisafumbi* (*lisáfu*). To show his agreement the woman's husband sends the partner a dog or a few hens (2, 3, 5, or more, depending on his wealth or his satisfaction). The intermediary is not the woman involved but one of her co-wives. Nor is one of the husband's children ever charged with this office. Thereafter, the two partners regularly give each other gifts. The husband's presents are all called *bofimo* (the generic term given to all presents from a woman to her lover), while those of the other man are called by the term *mpasé*, "package, gift sent" -- also a generic term.

Often the woman herself urges her lover to make their concubinage public because she wishes to regularize the situation as she fears its possible consequences. Sometimes she threatens to break off all relations, but usually she nevertheless succumbs to temptation.

As soon as the concubinage is made public in the manner described, that publication itself renders it legitimate. The expression used for the act of contracting such a union is *lɔ́ɔ lisafumbi*.

If a woman's official lover catches her in the act of adultery, he does not denounce her to her husband but personally demands an indemnity as if he himself were the legitimate husband. If the culprit refuses to pay him, the lover breaks off relations with the woman and denounces her to her husband. Thus the adulterer is punished in any case, and from his point of view it is preferable to pay the *losafumbi*, who will be satisfied with a smaller indemnity. [338]

Since the woman does not belong to her lover, he has no rights whatsoever to the fruits of her labor or to her children, who are considered her husband's. But the partner has a right to expect that the woman will prepare food for him. The husband, for his part, has the right to his partner's assistance. The social situation is therefore entirely in the husband's favor. The lover's only gain is to have access to a woman whom he could not otherwise have obtained. But the respect due to the legitimate husband prohibits him from freely availing himself of the woman while he is in the village.

S: Hulstaert--323 M-6 (ca. 1930) 1938 FOX: Mongo FOX: Nkundo

[339] great ceremonies because they lack the necessary wealth.

[340] The *bomfitsa* is never *nkitolɛ́*. But before he makes one of his wives a *nkitolɛ́* a husband must ask the advice and approval of the *bomfitsa*. For that purpose he presents her with a *bompfɔngɛ́* (a dog, a goat, some rings), which expresses his recognition of her right and authority and at the same time is intended to secure a favorable response. If the *bomfitsa* does not agree, the matter is not followed through. But that situation is only hypothetical. In practice the *bomfitsa* yields to her husband's preferences, since he has recognized her rights in the proper fashion.

When a husband wants to create a *nkitolɛ́*, he first makes all the preparations, brews the sugar-cane beer and collects all the riches that are to be distributed. Then he invites the neighboring villages and calls together his relatives. On the assigned day, the assembly having gathered, the chosen wife puts on her most beautiful garments and adorns herself with her richest ornaments. She [341] seats herself on a magnificent *bolinga* [341] (a portable couch) (1)

1. See the excellent drawing in Engels, *Les Wangata* [The Wangata], *Revue Congolaise*, Vol. 1, no. 4, p. 488, 1910).

in front of the audience. Her husband then announces to those assembled that henceforth this woman is to be his favorite; woe unto the man who has the temerity to seduce her or even show affection toward her -- he will be a dead man (or he will have to pay an [342] enormous indemnity of 25 to 50 *bolonga*). In the past it often happened that a seducer was killed or reduced to slavery without further ado. When the husband has paid 25 rings or more to the wife's family and gifts have been distributed to the assembled personnels, his words are ratified by the assembly, and henceforth the contract between them and the husband is sealed. Dances, song, and drink follow.

[343] The favorite wears no special garb. She wears the same clothing as all the other women and wears furs only for dances.

Thus a favorite is in every way the object of her husband's preference. He divides with her all presents he receives, while the other wives are not included in this expression of generosity. But in the matter of sexual relations, apart from his trips, he has obligations to all of them. The most he can do is to add one night to the usual number (see below).

The co-wives adapt fairly well to this preferential system. Nevertheless, there is a good deal of backbiting on account of it. It may also happen that one or another of the wives is jealous to the point of being unable to bear it. [347] The signs of her rancor multiply, and a divorce results in the end.

The *nkikidi* does not have to go into mourning for anyone other than her husband. Even then she does not remove her clothing. But she does not have to abide by mourning regulations either for her parents or her own children.

Like the other wives, the favorite is passed on through inheritance. But she cannot be taken as a *bonfili* by anyone except an elder brother of the deceased.

Nkikidi is the specific term by which a favorite is designated. Its etymology is unknown to me. The word is used everywhere, although the *Isaffi* often say *lokilo* (whose etymology is equally obscure). Another less common (older?) term known to the Bonkoso, Bongili, Wilanot, and Bekkala is *bongili* or *bongilí* (1). In addition

> 1. The Ekonda call the favorite *lokilo*. The Elanga of Lomangenya say *lolif*, a name borne by certain women among the Nkundó between Jwafé and Bolomo. Might this also be an old name?

to the term *Ikonjaka*, already cited, there is also the word *nkikidi*, a generic term meaning "preference, predilection" or, when applied to a child or a slave, "an object one does not want to dispose of." The favorite is also called *Nkikidimé*, "untouchable," because other men may not have relations with her.

less influence than a monogamist or bigamist who is intelligent and fearless. And in the present circumstances one meets monogamists who, because of either their economic situation or their social or political position, enjoy a much greater authority [371] than many polygamists. Intellectual and moral superiority on their part is beginning to make its value felt.

3) *Fame and vanity.* Because of the very nature of the marriage system, which is intimately bound up -- not to say based on -- financial transactions, the number of wives determines the extent of a man's wealth. And here as everywhere wealth has a fascination; it is considered a mark of superiority. Vanity shines upon it. And since the possession of wives is the most obvious expression of wealth, the Nkundó see in it as a superior means by which to acquire great renown and an illustrious name.

3) A concern over keeping the capital in the family. Personal wealth consists almost entirely of metals (especially copper) and domestic animals. Thus this is the capital involved in the financial transactions accompanying marriage, and in that way it is invested with interest (children, work, influence).

Like all pagan people the Nkundó are essentially covetous and egoistic. They do not like to give but want everything for themselves. Except for persons to whom he is bonded by natural ties or sincere affection, a Nkundó does not help others except through interdependence or in the hope of reciprocity in some form or other. Thus when he possesses an excess of wealth, even if it is considerable and entirely superfluous, he does not yield it. The idea would never occur to him to give a few copper rings to an indigent bachelor, for example, if he is not forced to do so because of interdependence in the family. Thus, if there are more girls than boys, the excess bride price will be used by him to augment the number of his own wives. For in order that his daughter not be deprived of her sister, the bride price received must be used again as a bride price. Note that this reasoning has but a limited validity. It is a fact that the ancient custom [371] was for the father to take all his daughters' bride prices for himself, as we have seen in Chapter IV. He did not become polygamous because of excess [bride price]; he was polygamous before his son married.

to return to join the procession, or may be able to do so only with difficulty.

The act of carrying a corpse to its native clan is not designated by any specific term. The expression is simply tɔ́ka tɔ́ka, "to go and return the corpse."

In one or more places near the entrance to the village, a barrier (bokáko, lokombí, or lofiaka) made of posts and palms is set up. There the relatives of the deceased, armed, wait for the procession of the husband's relatives, who are also armed, and forbid them to continue their march. Before passing, the latter must make a payment. The valuables given are called bɔ́ɛ́ko bɔ́ɛ́ko or simply bokáko (or lofiaka). The family of the deceased calls to the procession, "Halt! You will not pass here." The latter reply, "We come to bring [436] you the corpse of your child; we want to break down the barrier. Let us pass; here are the gifts." The nɔ́ngɔ hands over a knife, a brass or copper ring, or some equivalent object (for instance, money, nowadays). Thereupon the members of the deceased's clan move away. The lɔ́kombólowá (persons related to both clans) break down the barrier, and the procession passes, headed by the nɔ́ngɔ and the lɔ́kombólowá. The husband follows the coffin.

In the past it was almost always necessary to force a passage through the barrier. The wife's family did not want to open and the husband's family did not want to pay, and so they came to blows. The group bearing the corpse tried to break down the barrier, while their adversaries tried to prevent them from doing so. The arms used in that struggle were chiefly pointed sticks which the members of the two camps threw at each other; more rarely, arrows were used. The specific name for this sort of brawl is gɔ́gɔ́lɔ́. Certain clans specialize in this sport. Thus between Bofeko and Lileko, there is a regular battle every time. In such serious cases the barrier is heavily fortified; the posts are thick and hard, and interwined with thorny creepers (bokáko, lɔmpɔ́lí, wɔngɔ́lɔ́la, etc.) and thorny shrubs (wɔ́ngɔ́, etc.). A quantity of venomous biting ants (lofumbe, nkɔ́nkɔ́, bɔ́ɛ́mbo, etc.) are added. If the brawl becomes serious, the nɔ́ngɔ and the other lɔ́kombólowá intervene and impose peace by requiring the husband's clan to pay.

to which a piece of raffia cloth is tied. When the procession has crossed the last barrier, the official witness goes ahead and plants the spear in the roof of the head of the family's hut. Hence the name applied specifically to this spear: ntɔwansambá (from ntɔwa, "to pierce," and nsambá "roof"). The spear signifies that the widower's family is not coming with evil intentions, but that they are moved by feelings of the greatest friendship -- wɔ́kɔ́a to ntɔ́bɔ́á l'etumba; tɔ́bɔ́á nɔ́á ɔlɔmbɛlɛ lɔ́kɔ́á y'ɔ́ma.

The piece of cloth is a sign of respect for the mother of the deceased, in memory of the pain she suffered in giving birth to her daughter and the care she exercised in her upbringing, and as consolation for the terrible blow that has come to her in the death of her child. She will wear this cloth after the end of mourning. If the mother has died before her daughter, this cloth goes to one of the mother's sisters, aunts, or other relatives, who is in some sense her substitute. It is therefore a payment to the mother's clan.

The spear and the cloth are usually designated by the common name lɔ́kɔ́ngá l'esɔ́lɔ, "spear and cloth." A knife, particularly an inglɔndá, can be substituted for the cloth, but the name esɔ́lɔ is retained. Nowadays the cloth is no longer given, but a knife which is given the name esɔ́lɔ is always substituted for it. (1) Nevertheless,

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1. The reason for this substitution is, first of all, the greater value of the knife and, second, the near impossibility of obtaining raffia cloth (see Introduction).

in memory of [432] the ancient custom, a piece of European cloth is often attached to the end of the spear.

When the corpse has been deposited in the head of the family's hut, the two clans greet each other in the usual fashion. The women continue to weep for some time. The husband's clan [262] go and sit at a little distance. Then the relatives of the deceased [431] instruct their wives to collect the presents to give the widower.

These consist of various foods: maize, bananas, smoked meat or fish, caterpillars, salt, hens, etc., one or several dogs (bompângi) that are alive (mbwá dâ nkunja, "dog with hair") or their value in specie (2 rings or 1 ring and an equivalent knife, which for this purpose is called mbwá dâ bolimbá or dâ bokonga), as well as a knife for killing and cutting up animals called lolóolo. The bólinanyi and the bolóólo each brings his part. Note that this gift never includes vegetables (bimuládí).

When everything is collected and considered adequate, the nkonga is called, together with the deceased's own sons, so that they can thus give their opinion and later have a good basis for testimony. As remuneration for his services, the nkonga receives a payment (nyonga) of a bolóka fish or a bolómba rat, as well as a bunch of bananas (for which a ring is sometimes substituted). With reference to this subject I should like to recount an interesting part of the negotiations at which I was present one day. The nkonga expressed his dissatisfaction with the fact that he was given only a single bolóka. "It is so little," he said, "in comparison with all the trouble I had to take. I had to settle the matter of the bride price; I had to reconcile man and wife when they quarreled; I had to intervene many times; I always had to run between the two clans; for many years I was myself out without ever having any rest. And for all that trouble I get such small recompense." I was asked my opinion. I could only express approval of the nkonga's view. One of the relatives [433] of the deceased also considered him to be right: "He was always obliged to come and go between the two families; his voice has become hoarse from his endless interventions in palavers and quarrels; he well deserves that another bolóka be added." Everyone sided with our opinion, and the nkonga was satisfied.

After receiving his present, the nkonga detaches himself from the group. Together with the other bosambólowó and any intelligent strangers who may be present and might be able to give an opinion to settle an incidental argument, he sits down between the two opposing clans, a slight distance from each.

All the payments must pass through the ndonga. He is the one who transmits the desired objects from one group to the other. He intervenes in the disputes that arise in order to settle them and re-establish peace. He explains the various points of view, elucidates some consideration whose significance the other group does not seem to fully comprehend, etc.

As has already been said many times, there can be several ndonga. Legally all of them can intervene personally or through their officially recognized representatives. Thus, several months ago (1937) at Bonjoko, Bekombe, wife of Ikomo of Bonambili, was present at a ekanji discussion. No one paid any attention to her. At one point she threw herself into the discussion by reprimanding the chief ndonga and the families involved, asking them on what basis they were excluding her from this affair. Did not her husband have the right to intervene? Was he not also a ndonga? Since he had gone fishing in the Jwaid, it was impossible for him to come. She could therefore legitimately substitute for him. Then why was she being left out? She was quickly pacified, and the persons involved admitted that she was right and apologized for their forgetfulness and negligence.

The wives of the deceased's clan place the gifts of food at the ndonga's feet. The bokilidi (the youngest) of the clan goes and explains to him what they are and for whom [434] the gifts are intended. (1) One portion goes to the bokaki of the deceased, that

> 1. In the Nkundó hierarchy it is always the youngest who is charged with the execution of all such small tasks, at the behest of the head of the family.

is, the bad'ifafa of the husband's clan; another portion goes to the bofeme (the husbands), that is, to the widower and his family; a third part is set aside for kinswomen of the deceased who have come from villages into which they are married in order to be present at the funeral.

The clan of the deceased first asks the other clan "for news" (bola mongo). The latter reply that one of their members had

364 married the daughter of the first clan, and she had lived happily with her husband, performed conjugal services for him, and had begotten children for him. Subsequently she fell ill, as they were informed at the time, and now God has taken her away and they have come to bring the corpse back to them. The wife's clan replies: "That is understood, but before we continue to ask each other for news, do accept the present (lionja) which we offer you." Thereupon the ndonga enumerates all that has been collected and passes it to the widower.

364 The foods thus given are a friendly welcoming gift, therefore they are not counted as a payment nor, furthermore, as part 493 of the nkumi. Only the domestic animals are considered such. They can be eaten on the spot or kept alive. Since the prepared food is a present, it must be eaten on the spot. Theoretically, none of it may be taken home. If it is taken home for some reason or other, however, it is still forbidden to allow anyone to eat of it who was not present at the funeral gathering. As for the raw food, the recipients are free to carry it away if some is left over.

364 Disputes may arise on the subject of the dog -- such as 518 one I witnessed one day. The presents offered included the equivalent of the value of a dog in rings rather than a living dog. [4351] The head of the widower's family demanded a dog in flesh and blood. The reason he gave was that many of his bilonanyi had come to the funeral and, as an expression of his thanks for their condolences, he wanted to give them a dog. As he would not yield, the wife's family had to replace the two rings with the animal demanded.

Then the ndonga explains to the family of the deceased that he has already brought the mange, the lilonga, and the nsio. Nowadays it happens that the spear and the cloth are not given until this time, especially if the families refrain from erecting barriers and fighting. In such cases the payments of passage are made at the same time. If the two settlements are very near each other, the people are even beginning to omit the sending of the monge, a bilonanidowa goes and confirms the news of the death, which is already expected and which the lokoli will just have announced.

What is one to do if even in such cases it is taught, "One must respect" the native customs?

The inheriting of wives existed everywhere; it was, in fact, the only wealth left behind by the native. The details of the distribution differed according to district or tribe. Thus, for instance, in some districts it was the eldest son who alone inherited all of the wives of his father. This was in order to preserve the rank and the clan of the family. Prestige and power actually depended only on the number of wives that one possessed. In this case, however, this eldest son had, in place of his father, to provide a wife for his younger brothers and the sons of his sisters. As far as impediments to marriage were concerned, generally they strictly observed the impediment of blood relationship; two blood relatives, even in a distant degree, should never enter into marriage, [541] with the exception of the irregularities mentioned above. As for relatives by marriage, these do not exist for them in any degree. There is, nevertheless, one case that somewhat resembles relationship by marriage, namely, the Nkita might never be in the home of a man together with the woman whose Nkita she was. Thus, the son-in-law or the brother-in-law might never take the Nkita of his wife into his home. If, however, the wife had left or died, there was no further impediment.

When, like the inheritance above, the family had returned the bride price and had then married the woman to another man, this second husband also had to give a gift to the one who, according to the law of inheritance, had the right to the wife. This gift was called a hongonge.

If the wife who was loved by the family had children, only a part of the bride price had to be returned. Sometimes the wife was loved completely through her children. The children then remained with the family of the deceased husband, and they then represented the value of the bride price of their mother. If, however, such a woman was married again by her family, they demanded a second bride price for her.

Sometimes a single woman was the Nkita of several other women. In the inheritance several people then had a right over her, and everyone demanded his share. For instance, a young man

had to acquire a wife with the bride price or with a supplement of the bride price of his sisters. Three of his sisters, for instance, were married, and he needed 3,000 mitako to pay for his intended wife. Now he went with presents to his three brothers-in-law and asked for 1,000 mitako from each of them. The bride price was already paid to the father; the 1,000 mitako that he asks are a supplement of the bride price.

With these 3,000 mitako, our young man pays for his wife. This wife now becomes the Nkita of the three sisters. If this young man dies, his three sisters and his three brothers-in-law all demand their share back from the widow. If she is sold, the price must be divided among the three brothers-in-law. If she remains in the family of her husband, with the uncle or brother, she continues to be the Nkita of her three sisters-in-law.

[542] There also exists a general rule and custom that the family which has received the bride price regularly give gifts to their daughter and son-in-law or sister and brother-in-law. These gifts consisted of goats, dogs (which also have a rather large value among the natives), ducks, etc., but the gifts never consisted of money. These gifts were in turn given by the son-in-law or brother-in-law to the one who had helped him pay the bride price.

For instance, if the young man of whom we just spoke received gifts from the family of his wife, he would then have given these gifts to his three brothers-in-law. These gifts were often so much that the value of them was almost equal to the bride price that the man had paid for his wife. Custom demanded, in such a case, that the man then pay a supplement to the bride price.

In case the bride price had to be given back, the gifts that the family had already given might be subtracted from the bride price. When such disputes are brought before a European, it is difficult for him to settle them, for the value is tremendously exaggerated by the parties. The husband will demand the return of a much larger bride price than he actually gave, while the family on its side will estimate the gifts that they had given as much higher than the actual value or amount.

Something about prices, the bride price for wives, and native money value.

Their first original money was as follows.